

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM



MARVEL

No 6

Captain BRITAIN

June
1985

U.S. \$2.50
CAN. \$3.25

50¢



FOR THE FIRST TIME NICHOLAS COURTNEY ON VIDEO!

in

Myth Makers 3



The third in an exciting new series, hosted by ITV and Channel Four link man KEITH HARRISON. Each edition profiles the career of a personality from the worlds of television science fiction.

NICHOLAS COURTNEY is one of the best known and respected actors to have appeared in "DOCTOR WHO". From BRET VYON to THE BRIGADER, he has acted alongside five Doctors. Interviewed at home in London he discusses the series, his life and career as an actor and his hopes for the future.

Don't miss this insight into the life of a great character from "DOCTOR WHO".

ONLY £8.50 EACH INCL P&P
(OVERSEAS ORDERS £11)

STILL AVAILABLE: MICHAEL WISHER

JOHN LEESON

@ £8.50 EACH (OVERSEAS £11)

Please send me cassettes of MYTH MAKERS 1 (WISHER)
Please send me cassettes of MYTH MAKERS 2 (LEESON)
Please send me cassettes of MYTH MAKERS 3 (COURTNEY)
I enclose a cheque/P.O. for £ to cover costs.



NAME:

ADDRESS:

POSTCODE

Allow 28 days for delivery

Please tick appropriate box.	
VHS	B'MAX
PAL (UK)	
NTSC (USA)	

ALL CHEQUES AND POSTAL ORDERS SHOULD BE
MADE PAYABLE TO: REELTIME PICTURES LTD.

AND SEND TO: MYTH MAKERS (MARVEL)

REELTIME PICTURES LTD., 80 MONTHOLME ROAD, BATTERSEA, LONDON SW11 6HY.



SPECIAL OFFER

TO ALL MARVEL READERS.

ORDER A COPY OF MYTH MAKERS 1, 2 AND 3
FOR ONLY £23. (OVERSEAS ORDERS £30).

If you've managed to make it past that spectacular cover, welcome to *Captain Britain* Monthly, Number 6. Already, we're half a year old, so we thought we'd mark the event with this devastating wrap-around cover painting from Alan Davis. There have been a number of requests from readers asking for pin-ups and such – hopefully, this poster-cover will fit the bill. And if you're worried about having to damage your copy to remove pages 1 and 36, you could always think about buying two issues. . . well, where else can you get as powerful a poster for just 50 pence?

Speaking of readers' correspondence, once again we must apologise for the non-appearance of the *Captain Britain Communications* page this month. Regrettably, that old bugbear 'lack of space' has meant we've had to hold over the page for yet another issue. Rest assured, however, that every *Communications* letter is read and as soon as we can, we'll be featuring the comments of *Captain Britain* fans from both sides of the Atlantic.

It's fascinating to read and compare British and American assessments of the issues we've put together so far – so please keep those letters coming. Our address is: *Captain Britain Communications*, 23 Redan Place, Bayswater, London W2 4SA, England.

And that's about it – apart from the rest of the issue! Hope you enjoy it. . .

Editor: Ian Rimmer • **Assistant Editor:** Simon Furman • **Design:** John Tomlinson • **Production:** Alison Gill and Jez Meteyard • **Advertising:** Sally Benson (01 221 1232)



Captain BRITAIN contents



CAPTAIN BRITAIN — Captured by Gate-crasher's Technet, Brian Braddock finds himself *A Long Way From Home* P4
ABSLOM DAAK — DALEK KILLER — The 26th Century Earthman sobers up in the midst of some Draconian court intrigue P16
NIGHT RAVEN — Place your bets. . . it's Night Raven against a school of crooked gamblers P20
CITY — Amis continues his search for missing T-Vid cameraman, Gallagher, in *Snapshot* P23
SPACE THIEVES — Roast pork is on the menu when our mis-matched mercenaries encounter the porcine-featured Zarts P28

Published monthly by MARVEL COMICS LTD., 23 Redan Place, Bayswater, London W2 4SA, ENGLAND. Copyright © 1985 by Marvel Comics Group, a division of Cadence Industries Corporation. All rights reserved. No similarity between any names, characters, persons or institutions in this magazine with any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental.

BEFORE HE OPENS HIS EYES HE KNOWS THAT HE IS NOT WHERE HE SHOULD BE.

HE SWEEPS THE CURTAINS OF PERFUMED SLEEP FROM HIS MIND AND MEMORY ILLUMINATES HIM.

HE HAD LOST THE FIGHT AT THE MANOR. HIS DOUBLE HAD BEATEN HIM.

CONFUSION SENDS RIPPLES OF NAUSEA THROUGH HIM. WHERE IS THIS PLACE THAT THEY HAVE BROUGHT HIM TO?

THE AIR IS NOT LIKE THE AIR OF EARTH. IT SMELLS OF HOT BRASS.

Captain BRITAIN

HE IS A LONG WAY FROM ENGLAND...

A LONG WAY FROM HOME

JAMIE DELANO
ALAN DAVIS
CO-CREATORS
ANNIE HALLFACREE
LETTERS
IAN RIMMER
EDITOR



HOW COULD HE HAVE LET
HIMSELF BE BEATEN? HE
HAD BEEN FIGHTING FOR
HIS HOME. FOR HIS FAMILY...



BUT HE HAD BEEN
TOO CONFIDENT.

THE IMPOSTER HAD
BEEN SO CUNNING.



HE HAD ALLOWED HIS
CONSCIOUSNESS TO
SLIP AWAY...

AND NOW, SINCE HE WAS HERE, THE
ENEMY WHO HAD STOLEN HIS
IDENTITY MUST BE IN HIS FAMILY
HOME, WITH...

...BETSY!

BRIAN!
I'M YOUR
SISTER!

PLEASE...
WHAT'S THE
MATTER WITH
YOU..?

CAN'T
YOU GUESS..?

MY NAME'S
NOT REALLY
BRIAN...



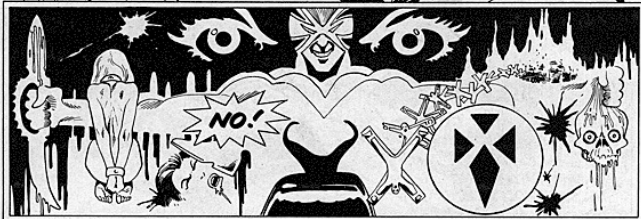






DO YOU REMEMBER HOW THEY ROAR, MY KAPTAIN? DO YOU RECALL HOW THEY MAGNIFY OUR SPLENDOR?

SATURDAYNE... ABOUT LAST NIGHT... I WAS TIRED. IT WAS GOOD TO SEE YOU BUT I SHOULDN'T BE HERE. I HAVE TO...



PEOPLE OF THE
EMPIRE OF TRUE BRITON.
TODAY IS A DAY OF
GREAT GLORY. NOT ONLY
HAVE OUR WARWOMEN
BEEN VICTORIOUS IN
THE ANTARCTIC STRIFE
ZONE...

... BUT ALSO, KAPTAIN
BRITON, HERO OF THE EMPIRE
HAS RETURNED FROM MISSIONS
ON FAR OFF WORLDS TO BRING
MORE HONOUR TO THIS
GLITTERING DAY.

LET THE
SLAUGHTER
COMMENCE.

SO, SYRON BRA-DHOK, KAPTAIN
BRITON. SEE HOW I STILL FAVOUR
YOU. THIS ONCE I SHALL FORGIVE
YOU YOUR DESERTION.

HAIL
MASTREX

KAPTAIN
BRITON

SUDDENLY HE UNDERSTANDS.
SYRON BRA-DHOK. IF THIS IS
THE IMPOSTER'S EARTH IT
MUST BE HIS SATURNINE.
TOO. HOW CAN HE HAVE BEEN
SO STUPID AND BLIND?

YOU'RE
NOT OPAL LUNA
SATURNINE, OMNIVERSAL
MASTREX...?

I AM OPUL
LUN SAT-YR-NIN,
MASTREX OF
BRITON.

SATURNINE WAS SELFISH AND
RUTHLESS BUT SHE WAS NOT A
SADIST. FEAR AND LOATHING
MATE WITHIN HIM. ANGER AND
SHAME SQUIRM INTO LIFE.

HE MUST
RUN...

COME BACK...
YOU WILL NOT
LEAVE!

GETAWAY
FROM YOU SCUM!









MY GOD...

IMPRESSIVE,
EH?

WHAT IS IT?
WHAT'S IT DONE
TO THEM?

IT'S PANDORA...
SENTIENT SLIME-MOULD.
PRIMITIVE BUT VERY
TOUGH... INCREDIBLE
ELASTICITY, SUCKS THE
LIFE OUT OF 'EM.



Ahhhhh...
She's resting...
She's full...very
warm. Very sweet...
soft...soft...
soft...

RIGHT. ALL
HANDS TO THE
PUMPS. LET'S
GET HER
CLEARED UP.



MAKE SURE
YOU'VE DISENGAGED
BONE-BAG. I DON'T
WANT YOU GETTING
SUCKED UP AND
GOING CLAUSTRO
ON ME.

HEY, LITTLE
LIZARD... C'MON,
SNAP OUT OF IT.
IT'S OVER... C'MON
NOW, LET HER GO...



"...IT'S OVER."

TIME PASSES. THE ONLY SOUND IS THE SUCKING OF THE PUMPS AS THE STOLEN LIFE OF THE CITY IS SWALLOWED AND SQUEEZED INTO TIGHT, TIGHT DARKNESS.

NO ONE HAS SPOKEN. IT IS AS IF WORDS COULD NOT PENETRATE THE DEAD AIR.

Careful, Mother...
Something alive...
Something unhappy.

COME, CAPTAIN.
THERE IS NOTHING TO BE DONE HERE. THE PARTY'S GONE SOUR. WE MUST BE AWAY.

BUT WE CAN'T JUST...

YOU HAVE NO CHOICE, CAPTAIN. THIS IS NOT YOUR CONCERN, YOU HAVE YOUR PLACE.

COME BACK! YOU CAN'T GO AGAIN...NOT AGAIN...

HE TURNS HIS BACK AND WALKS AWAY. FROM THE CHAMBER OF THE WORLD HER WORDS PURSUE HIM LIKE FRANTIC BIRDS.

hsssssssst!

ONE FEELS THAT ONE SHOULD HAVE SOMETHING GLIB TO SAY IN TIMES OF HORROR...

SATURNINE...

HE THINKS OF ENGLAND, OF BETSY, OF HOME, WHERE HE SHOULD BE...

BRIAN...
WHERE ARE YOU?

Next: **Things Fall Apart**

CLASSIFIED

MC49

♦ SHOPS ♦

NOSTALGIA & COMICS

14-16 Smallbrook Queensway,
BIRMINGHAM B5 4EN.
Tel: (021) 643 0143.
American and British comics: Rock, SF,
Horror and General Film magazines.
Current and back issues. Comicstrip, SF,
Horror and Television orientated toys.
Figures, kits, games, vehicles, masks etc.
Mail order list is available for a s.a.e. Our
large comic shop is open for you to call in.
Mon-Fri 10.00-5.45, Saturday 10.00-6.00.
We can accept your ACCESS whether you
call, write or phone.
"A comic treasure house" - Birmingham Post

COMIC SHOWCASE

17 Menneville Street, London WC2
01-240 3684

Open six days a week 10am to 6pm.
We are THE SPECIALISTS in old
American comics and our vast stock
ranges from Golden Age through to the
70s, including Marvel, DC, C.C.,
E.C.s, Timelys and many more.
Regular shipments from the USA
enable us to offer a wide selection of
the non-distributed Marvels. We now
offer a full range of advance IMPORT
comics from all the major companies.
We are always interested in buying
collections of old or rare comics in
nice condition.

FORBIDDEN PLANET I

Science Fiction and Comics,
23 Denmark St.
LONDON WC2H 8NN
01-316 4172

FORBIDDEN PLANET II

Film and TV fantasy,
58, St. Giles High St.
LONDON WC2H 8LH
01-379 6042

Shops: Mon-Sat: 10-6; Thurs: 10-7

COMIC MART

Largest regular marketplace in Europe
for Comics and Film Material
at Central Hall, Westminster,
LONDON

Stalls: 12-00. Admission free.
Dates: June 8, Aug 3



Authorized by
BBC Enterprises Ltd.
All items of new
merchandise. Some
collectors items and American im-
ports. Mail Order Service available.
Send 25p in stamps plus a large SAE
for a price list or \$1.00 or equivalent
for overseas inquiries. WHO mer-
chandise bought at competitive rates.

AS METROPOLITAN WHARF
(ROADSIDE WARHOUSE)
WAPPING WALL, WAPPING,
LONDON E1, 01-481 0826.
1 mile from Tower Bridge - 2 minutes
walk Wapping Station. Turn right at
tube, follow road by the river side.
Open 10am-5pm Mon-Sat, possible
Sunday in Summer.

♦ SHOPS ♦



Britain's latest and best Science
Fiction specialist shop. We sell every-
thing from comics, magazines &
books to toys, games, models &
masks in the fields of SF, Horror &
Fantasy. We also carry stocks of
Dungeons & Dragons - Scenarios -
Accessories. Send a SAE for lists and
details of our Mail Order service too.

Hull Special FX Ltd.
188 Spring Bank, Hull HU10 1PG

ODYSSEY 7

Manchester University Precinct
Oxford Road, Manchester

Open Mon - Sat 9.30 - 5.30.
Tel (061) 273 6666. The North's lead-
ing S.F., Comic, T.V., and Film
Shop. Stocking Books, Comics,
Magazines, Stills, Soundtracks,
Posters, T-shirts and Games. Clean,
modern premises, sales area over
1,000 sq. ft. Access to precinct via
escalator under Phoenix at Booth St.
traffic lights.

HEROES

The Comic Shop

Britain's longest-established comic
dealer still offers the widest selection of
comics for collectors in the country.
Good stocks of Marvel and DC are
complemented by a wide range of
American and British comics from the
1940s onwards: Eagle, TV21, 2000AD,
Dandy, Beano, plus annuals, Golden
Age, EC, 50s, horror, western and
much more. Open 11-6 Mon-Fri. Three
minutes from Highbury & Islington tube,
off Upper Street.

HEROES, 21 Canonbury Lane,
Islington, London N1 2SP.

Sheffield Space Centre

485 London Road, Healey,
Sheffield S2 4HL
Telephone: Sheffield 581040

We stock a large selection of S.F.
Fantasy paperbacks, American
comics, Portfolios, Magazines etc.
Open - Monday, Tuesday, Thursday
Friday 10am - 5pm, Saturday - 9am.
Closed Wednesday, SAE for list



120 Picton Road, Wavertree, Liverpool 15
Open Monday - Saturday 10.15-5.15
Specialists in American comic SF books
and fantasy film books. Only 15 minutes
from the city centre by buses 4, 60, 76, 78,
79, 86, 87, 89, 912, 13 and 1250-24.
Sorry, no mail order.

MAIL ORDER

FUTURESHOCK

IN SCOTLAND
200 Woodlands Rd, Glasgow,
G3 6LN. Tel: 041 333 0784
Gets the full range of new US and British SF
paperbacks, comics and media mag.
Together with thousands of back issues and
second-hand titles & board games, standing
orders, portfolios, handbooks, T-shirts etc.
Send a second class stamp for catalogue.

"HARLEQUIN"

1st for Book!
68 St. Petersgate, Stockport, Cheshire
(Dept MC3)
Giant 30+ page illustrations. Catalogue of
Movie, TV, Book-Books, Posters, Photos,
T-shirts, Badges, Calendars, Games.
100% of items on Doctor Who, Star Trek,
Star Wars

Free - plus large SAE Overseas £1

JOKES

FREE
Britain's No. 1 Joke
Catalogue packed
with over 550 practical jokes from 50

Sink bombs, whoopee cushions, fool-
y laser glass, creative tea bags,
smoke bombs, white sugar, cigarette
bangers, joke blood, soft mess, soap
swears, wet jokes, exploding jokes,
magic tricks, party fun kits, masks,
make-up, sex money, girl friend pens,
adult party packs, saucy novelties,
naughty presents, poster badges, the
complete Joke Shop by Post.
Send 13p stamp with your name and
address for bumper colour catalogue
and free gift to:
"THE FUNNY BUSINESS"
(DEPT. Y 187 WINCHESTER ROAD,
BRISTOL, BS4 3NJ)

WANDERLORD COMICS

26 Ashley Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth,
Dorset BH1 4JH. Phone: (0202) 37733
Over 150 titles are available on our unique
Standing Order Service: Marvel, DC, First
Comics etc! And you need only pay
NOTHING till you get your comic! Also
thousands of back issues, imports, por-
folios, books etc! Phone in your standing
order, or SAE for latest list!

♦ POSTERS ♦

POSTERS & PRINTS

Sci-fi rock pop humorous pin-ups
scenics etc. Choose from our vast
range available by mail order. Send
just 60p for our full catalogue listing
HUNDREDS of posters and prints
(many illustrated in full colour).
Cauldron Promotions (Dept HW)
47 Lanchester Rd. London N19 4JG

MAIL ORDER

"OUTER LIMITS"

The Fantasy Mail Order Service
offering you probably the most
comprehensive range of Sci-Fi,
Film and T.V. Fantasy related items
including books, magazines,
photos, stills, portfolios, games
and models. Dr Who, Star Wars,
Aventures etc. For lists send 50p to:
OUTER LIMITS, REMBRANT HOUSE,
WHIPPLED ROAD, WATFORD, HERTS.
Showroom Open, Mon-Sat 10am-6pm.
Callers welcome.

Dr Who Fans

Send a First Class Stamp for my latest
list of Dr Who: Books, Annuals,
Comics, and Merchandise. Also sub-
scription available for latest Paper-
backs and Handbooks. I will buy Dr
Who items in well! Blacks 7 and
2000AD list also available.
JOHN FITTON, 1, Orchard Way,
Hemslar, Nr. Goole,
North Humberside

SUBSCRIPTIONS

MARVEL UK are now
running their own
subscriptions service
for UK monthly titles.
To make sure you don't
miss any issues of your
favourite Marvel mags,
write to us for details

at:
MARVEL UK LIMITED,
23 REDAN PLACE,
BAYSWATER
LONDON W2 4SA.
(Please enclose s.a.e.)

♦ EVENTS ♦

LEEDS COMIC MART

Saturday, May 25th, Midday, Griffin Hotel,
Beaumont Road, Leeds.
Top dealers selling thousands of comics -
Marvel, DC etc - film magazines, posters,
books, games & a kind of literary
material! Full details (save): Golden Orbit,
34 Heworth Hall Drive, York YO1 5AQ
Future dates: June 29 & July 27.

Abslom Daak DALEK KILLER

Script: Steve Moore

Art: Steve Dillon

THE 24th CENTURY: THE ROMANIAN SHIPWRECK ENJOYS A TIME OF PEACE AND PROSPERITY, STANDING ALONE FROM THE LONG-DRAWN CONFLICT BETWEEN EARTH AND THE EVER-EXPANDING EMPIRE OF THE DALEKS. BUT NOW A FLEETING SPACE-WAR HAS ELIMINATED THE DALEK PURSUIT, TO ARRIVE ON ROMANIA ITSELF, BRINGING WITH IT... ABSLOM DAAK.









HIT BY A
DALEK ENERGY
BLAST? HOW LONG
WILL YOU BE
HERE?

ABOUT
20 MINUTES.
I GUESS...

AH, IS ONLY
IT HAD BEEN TWO
MINUTES? WELL,
LET ME GO...

YET EVEN NOW THE STRANDS
OF FATE ARE BEING WOVEN
TOGETHER...

PRINCE
SSALANDESS
HAS BEEN EXCEEDING
HIS AUTHORITY, IMPERIAL
MAJESTY! ONLY YESTERDAY
HE ALLOWED THE EARTHMAN
LANDING PERMISSION
WITHOUT CONSULTING
YOUR MAJESTY
HIMSELF...

AND THE
LISSET OF HIS
INDISCRETIONNESS
IS LONG...



YOU MUST
INVESTIGATE
THIS THOROUGHLY
GENERAL...

IN THE
MEANTIME,
THE FIRST
SECRETARY AIDON
CAN TAKE APPROPRIATE
MEASURES...



I AM
SORRY, EARTH-
MAN. WHAT YOU ASK
IS BEYOND THE RANGE
OF DOGGMAN MEDICAL
SCIENCE... I
CANNOT REVEAL
HER...

THEN FUEL
MY SHIP, SALANDESS.
AND I'LL HEAD FOR A
HUMAN WORLD.
WHERE MY
PEOPLE ARE...



AH, BUT
I NEED YOU
HERE, MY FRIEND,
TO CONVINCE OUR
PEOPLE OF THE DALEK
THREAT. YOU HAVE
KNOWN THEM...
FORGET THEM...

SSSTANDESS!
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING HERE?



BY THE ORDER
OF HIS MAJESTY,
THE EMPEROR... THE NOBLE
SSALANDESS IS
PLACED UNDER
ARREST...

ON
SUSPICION
OF
TREASON!



Next: Kill Wagon!



The Mysterious NIGHT-RAVEN

Script: Steve Parkhouse

Art: David Lloyd

NIGHT-TIME IN THE CITY... AND IN FAT FREDDIE'S POOL HALL, ACE DIAMOND WINDS UP HIS SIXTEENTH WIN OF THE EVENING. THE POT STANDS AT THREE THOUSAND DOLLARS... AND ACE IS ONE GAMBLER WHO NEVER PUSHES HIS LUCK...



LUCK DIDN'T FIGURE IN ACE'S GAME. HE COULD TAKE A SHUFFLED DECK AND DEAL HIMSELF THIRTEEN CONSECUTIVE CARDS OF THE SAME SUIT... WHEN THE MOOD WAS RIGHT...







Next: **Ace Of Ravens!**



A third-least shabby armchair, an office on Mezzanine, and a missing news reporter to find... this is the lot of Amis, cynical Private Eye of the future – this and a three tiered metropolis stretching through from the grime of Ground Zero to the scented spires of Plateau. This is the

SNAPSHOT episode 2

CITY

I awoke to the radio playing the broadcast of Benny Goodman's 1938 Carnegie Hall Jazz Concert. By the time I finally got out of bed, it was half over – the jam session after "Life Goes To A Party" was in full swing. Ghosts of a cheery day long past followed me through to my office/living room. Lester Young was playing tenor sax, as the see-phone wailed discordantly, bringing my half asleep brain tumbling back into the twenty-first century.

He was about fifty. Not the kind of man who'd buy you a drink at New Year. If ever. I guessed he was staring contemptuously at the screen before I even engaged the visual at my end.

by Mike Collins

Illustrations by
Mike Collins and Mark Farmer



This, I decided, was not my early morning sunshine call.

"Amis?"

I agreed to the possibility, but he wasn't there to talk with me, rather at me.

"You been down our works here at Cable 99, Amis. Botherin' people. These guys lost a buddy fairly recent. They're touchy. Upset. I'm their boss, an' I'm telling you to keep away. Right?"

I tried to tell him it was all part of a legitimate investigation, but 'their boss' wasn't in the mood for listening.

"If'n me or my men see you here, I ain't responsible for what happens to you, Seeker."

The screen blanked and I rubbed my head where one of his men had hit me with a spanner the day before. The less than veiled threat would have succeeded in putting me off if this had been an ordinary case. It wasn't.

Martin Gallagher, a cameraman for City Network News was missing after going to cover the death of the 'buddy' of the Cable 99 workers. Missing presumed dead in my book, but I get paid to hunt, so I intended to carry on seeking a bit longer. The case interested me – why would a top-flight reporter bother with the death of an inconsequential Ground Zero maintenance man with a stunningly mediocre criminal record?

I was going to find out. That didn't mean it was going to make a lot of sense.

Samantha Daly, the CNN coordinator who had contracted me in the first place, smiled and welcomed me into her office. After the half hour Cityrail and Upshaft journey, all in cramped conditions, the scale of her office struck me hard. My entire apartment, third least shabby chair-and-all, would have breathed comfortably inside this one room. The fittings were mostly art deco, with dilution of 1950s kitsch here and there. Amongst those in the know, chrome and bakelite were the current favourites. 'Immediate Art' they called it. Radiator grilles and kettles, I called it.

"You like my trinkets?" She was obviously proud of belongings that sixty years ago were functional trash. I agreed politely, but not too enthusiastically, so as not to tempt her into a vast and rambling description of the wall ornaments.

"Ms. Daly, I went to the cabling works in Sector Five yesterday and got minor concussion for my sins. Is there

anything else you think you should tell me concerning Martin Gallagher's disappearance from S.5?"

She looked at her desk, ponderously. Like a newsreader looking for notes. She raised her head.

"I can't think of anything."

"No one with Gallagher's rep. goes for the small fry, Ms. Daly. Frank Fiore was a minnow's minnow."

She thought some more. She got up and walked to the window that took up one half of a wall. She looked out. Her luxury office's view of Armstrong Tower was higher and closer than the one from my own squalid living room. But it was still the same tower. Still untouchable.

I figured she was stone-walling me, but then I get paid by the hour not results. I could wait. At least, that's what I'd generally think. But since I'd come onto this case, the sense of time slipping away – and me losing my footing in it – was in the back of my mind.



I went for the subtle approach.

"Look – how do you expect me to honour my contract when it's patently obvious you're hiding something from me? Why was Fiore important? He do your wiring or something? A lost cousin?"

She turned.

"Okay, I thought it would only confuse things if you knew this..."

I sat up and listened.

"Frank Fiore phoned us at CNN a few hours before his death. He said he had a story. A big story. He didn't elaborate beyond mentioning 'high corruption'. A few hours later, we get through the police updates, and one has his obit. Gallagher saw it, and went down to cover it. He never checked in again. End."

She sat down again, shrugged, and criss-crossed her fingers slowly and deliberately.

"When I came to see you I didn't

feel you needed to know it. You're hired to find Gallagher, not worry about tap-and-stabs."

"Tap-and-stabs"... the CNN buzz for murderous assault and robbery. Hearing her use the jargon off-screen chilled me. Death turned into a racy, pulp-horror expression. Conveniently distant, divorced from its sordid reality.

"You say he phoned a story in? Surely that's important?"

She smiled indulgently. The ice-pick sharp investigator had become the rube on the street again. I'd lost the edge.

"Mr. Amis," she said, as if to a child, "do you have any conception just how much of CNN's time is taken up by pathetic nobodies, calling in with 'big stories'? Frank Fiore was just another seamy little glory hound with paranoid delusions. His death was so timed as to make his words seem portentous, that's all. Gallagher apparently thought there might be something to it. I didn't."

Her warmth and compassion for her fellow human beings filled me with delight. Not much.

"You don't think he died for his 'information'?"

Her look for me was now tolerant. Just.

"Because a man dies for a cause, it doesn't mean it's a cause worth dying for, Mr. Amis. Was that Descartes?"

"No. Vonnegut. 'The toleration became cooler.'"

"The fact remains that Mr. Fiore and his delusions are not of issue. You are to find our Mr. Gallagher, nothing more." She laughed slightly, "you aren't" Raymond Marlowe, you know.

No, I thought, or Philip Chandler. I decided I'd got all I could out of Ms. Daly, apologised for wasting her time and left. On the way out I passed some 'pathetic nobodies' trying to get airtime for their "Reclaim the Roads for Autos" campaign. Let's put death back on the roads. Hallelujah.

This wasn't sitting right at all. Any attempt to discuss the contract with the contractor resulted in the temperature diving by several dozen degrees celsius. It was midday and I hadn't spoken to a pleasant person yet. Maybe I should have stayed in bed and listened to "Archive Diamonds on the Radio. There was a Tom Waits concert being played about now, and my mood suited his melancholy tunes.

As I entered my favourite eatery, the strains of "Ghosts of Saturday Night" and the rasping tones of Waits' voice echoed through the twilight dim bar. Stan's Diner was less than half full. Only the usual crowd. There were some who came here in the morning and never left until Stan threw them out with the garbage at night. Others came in at certain times of day to eat the only meals they ever had, on Welfare. Stan stung his Mezzanine customers and subsidised the Ground Zeros. Me, I just got standard rates. The in-betweeners.

"How's business?" Stan smiled through the mess of blond beard. The heavily muscled arms that turned the burgers would turn your neck if you went for the till. I affected a Bogart cynicism, "Hey, I get paid."

That made him laugh. A rich, contented, I-don't-need-that-upwardly-mobile-jazz laugh. I smiled.

"Congratulations, you're the first really happy person I've met today."

"So you're going to give me a medal?"

"No, but how about an A-Dollar — fifty for chilli and coffee?"

"So I'm a charity now?"

The banter lasted maybe an hour and a half. I felt the best I'd felt all day. But that didn't get me any closer to finding Gallagher.

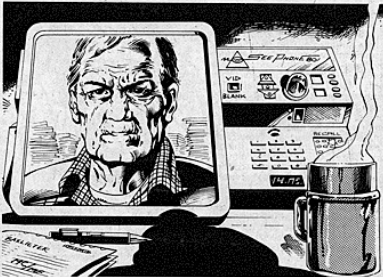
There had to be more to the "story" Fiore was selling than Daly gave credence to. She was just a hardened cynic. Me? I had a feeling about this one. Maybe Gallagher had died for the same reason as Fiore? I decided to find Gallagher by finding out what was happening in Cable 99. After my reception the day before, I thought it best to do the snooping from my own office.

I keyed into police records. "The boss" who had called that morning had a familiar face. My memory wasn't good enough to fix where I'd seen him before. Computers are better...

Thurgood Baxleiter. 54. 1.6m tall. German/American. Division head of Cable 99.

Police record: Criminal assault (1994); four charges of corruption and criminal incompetence (not proven) (1998).

Baxleiter. The "Brave New World" project. It had started to come back but I needed more information than the police files would give me. Sometimes computers aren't better. I



phoned Arny Davies.

A face, full and craggy, filled the screen. Arny Davies was one of a dying breed in our shining new cities — a newspaper man. One last 'real' reporter (but with no newspaper to work for) in a time of processed and packaged news. That's how he styled himself. Looking at CNN, I was tempted to agree.

"Howdy, Amis — why the call? Need info?"

"Brave New World. Baxleiter. 1998. Anything 'on file'?"

He looked distant. I thought his old mind had finally drifted off irretrievably into the nostalgia of the printed page. I half expected him to show me black print-smear fingers when he looked up again.

"1998. The year the Post closed. The News was only eight pages long then. Five of 'em ads. Yeah. I remember. 'Brave New World'. You want to visit and see the story? I could do with the company."

I agreed to go over. Davies lived on the other rim of Mezzanine, about the same level as me (read: low), but only had a view of Ground Zero and the river. A Cityrail got me there in twice the time it took me to see Daly. Up and down are faster than lateral. Who wants to see someone on the same level? You're either getting in with your betters or mocking your lessers. That's life.

In stark contrast to Samantha Daly's totally designed office, all cool styling

and precision, Arny Davies' apartment was chaotic. It's impossible to keep great masses of newsprint together like Arny did, without it seeming like a mess. He told me so. Often. Yellowing newspapers were piled everywhere, yet despite initial appearances, there was system. Sorted by day, month, and year, the papers were as well catalogued as information stored in the City computers.

"People come around, they ask me why I don't take out my trash. I tell 'em what to do. And sharpish." He chuckled.

He reached down a copy off a close pile. Oust came off it.

"March 12th, 1991. Amanda Salvino to run for Republican VP for 1992." He looked at me — it was time for his 'game'. It kept his mind active. Keep him alive.

"Okay, Amis — where did she represent?"

"Arny, I was twelve—"

"Wisconsin." He checked the paper.

"Yup. Wisconsin."

"All I know is she became president in '94 when Bordan got shot. Lasted six years."

"Worst damn president we ever had. Now what did you want? 'Brave New World' trials, was it?" He reached through another stack and drew out several papers. They were less substantial than the 1991 one but they told us what we needed to know.

By that evening, between us, we had managed to piece together the



story: there had been severe structural damage in a pilot housing project, part of the 'Brave New World' programme initiated by President Salvinio. A small mid-western city had been developed, and within months, collapsed. Thousands homeless, hundreds injured, about sixty dead. The architects and engineers were investigated and found wanting. A couple of names caught my eye: Baxleiter, senior engineer; and Thomas Brady, from the architects team. Now councilman Brady, City's highest shining star, "Mister" Urban Renewal himself. The 'Brave New World' case had fallen apart. Amongst others, Baxleiter and Brady had charges against them dropped. Squeaky-clean, like they'd never even jay-walked. The Republicans lost the next election because of the disaster, but it had started the rot. 'Brave New World' was policy. That's how City gets to look how it does. Like how all cities do.

As I rode back on Cityrail, my mind became a racetrack for crazed and frenzied ideas. Maybe Baxleiter hadn't been innocent and maybe he was back to his old slapdash ways. Maybe Fiore found out about defects in the pipework. Maybe someday soon the pipes and cables from the upstate reactors would decay and spill. Maybe Sector Five would become the brightest part of town. Maybe. Finding out something like



that would certainly cost Fiore his miserable life. And Gallagher his.

The track worked its way around the last curve of the rim, bringing me close to my sector. The racetrack in my mind did similar. The thought that won was: give up this contract, while your health lasts. Not even a photo-finish. I should have been ashamed. I was probably sitting on the greatest scandal of the still young century. Maybe mega-deaths. But we'd all heard about the 'disappearances' of vital witnesses back in the 90s. Old dogs do old tricks. I didn't fancy disappearing. Except to another City. Mars Colony? Perhaps, but wherever it was it had to be of my own choosing.

That's certainly it. That's exactly as I

reasoned it, as I worked my way from the station to my apartment. No sin covered. I was going to see-phone Samantha Daly and tell her the contract was off. Two days, concussion, and one hundred A-dollars. Not to mention the biggest scare of my life. Bye-bye.

As I keyed into my door I began to wonder which city to go for. This one I knew so well, which is why I was such a good Seeker here. What about wherever I moved to? A problem for tomorrow, I thought. Then I noticed.

Someone had used a baffle on the Tri-Lok, scrambled it.

Maybe I wasn't leaving City the way I'd intended to, after all. I wasn't armed. I rarely am. But still I stood at the door. I could have run, but what would have been the point? If they were here, they'd get me sooner or later, anyway.

With more courage than I'd have given myself credit for five minutes earlier, I slid the Impakt door open.

No blazing guns. No thrown knives. I peered into the darkness. Lit only by the dim glow of Armstrong Tower, sitting on my third-least-shabby chair was ... someone. He (She?) didn't move.

I strode in, hitting the light switch with a fully clenched fist. And stopped. Sitting there, stubbled and dirty, was the one human being I thought I'd never see.

Martin Gallagher smiled.





NOSTALGIA & COMICS LTD.

Invite you to

A midweek extravaganza for *Marvel's British Fans*
with Personal Appearances by
The Creative Team that brings you **THE X-MEN**

Chris Clairmont, Ann Nocenti, John Romita Jnr and Dan Green.

On Thursday afternoon, 23 May 1985.

At 14/16 Smallbrook, Queensway, Birmingham B5 4EN.

Tel No: 021 643 0143

EXCRUCIATINGLY BORING SPACE PILOT, CAPTAIN BRETT I. HARDING, TOGETHER WITH A JAWMED COMPANIO-BOT AND THE BEAUTIFUL, ENIGMATIC, LUCINDA, HAVE BEEN HI-JACKED BY TWO MEMBERS OF P.A.R.T.S. (PEOPLE AGAINST RUTHLESS TYRANNY SECT), WHO HAVE A DISTINCTLY WRECKLESS PLAN TO...

STEAL THE
ZART
IMPERIAL
JEWELS!?

HOLY GOSH, MADMAN!
YOU DON'T GO AROUND
RIPPING OFF THE ZARTS!
THEY'RE THE MOST
DANGEROUS BEINGS
IN THE GALAXY!

THEY
VAPOURISE
YOU JUST
FOR SPEEDING!

SCRIPT: COMPANIO-BOT
DAVE HARDER
ART: COMPANIO-BOT
DARRY MITSON
LETTERING: COMPANIO-BOT
RICHARD S. STARRINGS



AND EVEN IF YOU GOT
AWAY WITH JUST ONE
IMPERIAL JEWEL, THERE
ARE THE SPACE COPS -
THEY HATE ZARTS JUST
LIKE EVERYONE ELSE...

BUT THEY HATE
REVOLUTIONARY
TEA-LEAVES EVEN
MORE...

IF WE ARE
TO DESTROY
THE CORRUPT,
WE MUST
DESTROY THEIR
POWER BASE...



CAPTURING THE
OPPRESSOR'S RESOURCES
AND USING THEM TO FINANCE
THE UPRISING WILL NEVITABLY
ADVANCE THE GLORIOUS DAY
WHEN ALL WILL BE TRULY
FREE!

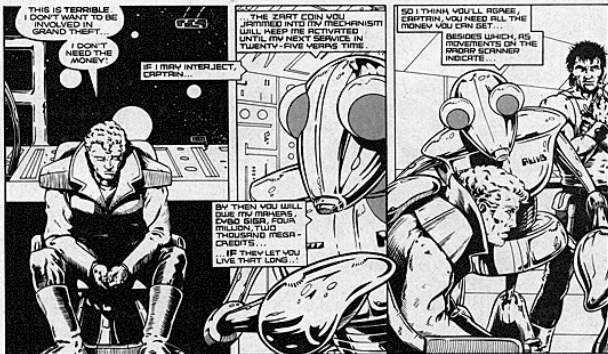


SO SIT
DOWN AND
SHUT UP,
SLIME-MOULD!



YEAH, STOP
GRIPING!

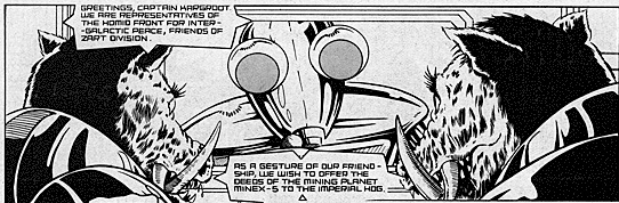
ALL YOU
HAVE TO DO
IS PILOT THE
SHIP...



SPACE THIEVES







GREETINGS, CAPTAIN HARGROOT. WE ARE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE HOMOID FRONT FOR INTER-GALACTIC PEACE, FRIENDS OF ZART DIVISION.

AS A GESTURE OF OUR FRIENDSHIP, WE WISH TO OFFER THE DEEDS OF THE MINING PLANET MINEX-5 TO THE IMPERIAL HOGS.



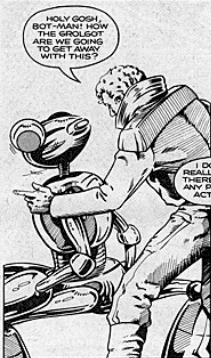
SHALL WE **BLACK** THE NOSELESS FREAKS, SIR?

NO, WAIT, THESE PRESSURE GROUPS CAN BE POWERFUL, AND THEY SOUND JUST MAD ENOUGH TO BE SERIOUS.



REPRESENTATIVES OF THE HOMOID FRONT FOR INTERGALACTIC PEACE - WE WILL TAKE YOU TO SEE THE GREAT PIG...

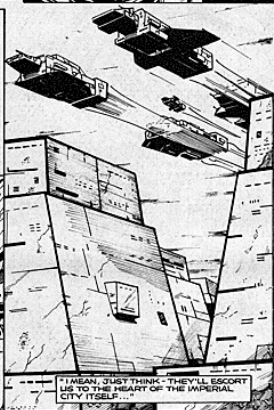
BUT BE WARNED - DO AS YOU ARE TOLD - OR YOU WILL BECOME ENTERTAINMENT!



HOLY GOSH, BOT-MAN! HOW THE GROLGOT ARE WE GOING TO GET AWAY WITH THIS?



I DON'T REALLY THINK THERE'LL BE ANY PROBLEMS, ACTUALLY...



*I MEAN, JUST THINK - THEY'LL ESCORT US TO THE HEART OF THE IMPERIAL CITY ITSELF...

"AND TAKE US STRAIGHT
TO THE ROYAL CHAMBER..."

"WHICH IS, AFTER ALL, THE MOST HEAVILY
GUARDED SUBTERRANEAN CHAMBER
IN THE GALAXY."

"THEY SAY THAT THE ZART SECURITY CORPS
THERE ARE HAND-PICKED FOR THEIR NASTINESS."

"AND THAT THERE ARE MORE
ANTI-PERSONNEL DEVICES..."

"PERSONALLY, I DON'T
BELIEVE THAT..."

"OOOH - DADDY WOULD
BE SO IMPRESSED IF HE
KNEW I'D BEEN INSIDE
THE IMPERIAL HOG'S
INNER SANCTUM..."

"...THAN THERE ARE IMPERIAL
JEWELS IN THE VAULT."

"THOUGH YOU
NEVER KNOW."

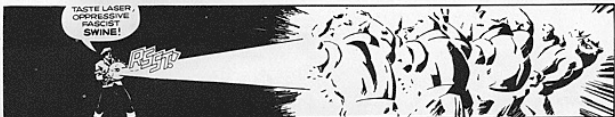
"THE RICHEST BANK VAULT
ON THIS SIDE OF THE
EXPLORED UNIVERSE..."

"AND
HERE WE
ARE!"



TASTE LASER
OPPRESSIVE
FASCIST
SWINE!

PART



P.A.R.T.S.
TAKE OUT THE
ZARTS!
FORWARD THE
REVOLUTION!



NNNNN!

I...
FEEL...
BETTER...



Oh...
WOW.

Oh...
DEAR.



Next: P.A.R.T.S. V P.A.R.T.S.!